

Landscape Forum Tartu and South Estonia 2024

An invitation to co-design a multidisciplinary and international landscape event based on discourse, context and visioning.

Contact person: Professor Simon Bell email simon.bell@emu.ee tel +3725056106 and

Mana Taheri Talesh email mana.taheri@emu.ee Tel +37253957068

Purpose of this document

This outline aims to inform confirmed and potential partners about the goals, structure and development process of the Landscape Forum Tartu and South Estonia 2024 (24.06.-28.06.2024). It is a basis for getting in touch, identifying shared goals and specifying entry points for new partners and collaborators into the Landscape Forum process.

Some key data on the landscape forum

- The forum will be hosted by **Estonian University of Life Sciences** in cooperation with the **LE:NOTRE Institute (NL)**.
- So far, **Tartu Cultural Capital 2024** and the **Estonian Union of Landscape Architects** have confirmed their support for the event.
- The forum is a **four day event** including a creative mix of workshops, excursions, debates, keynotes, round tables and exhibitions
- In order to be integrated into Tartu 2024, the event is scheduled for **June 24–28, 2024**
- It is a European/international event with **English** as working language
- We aim at an audience of **80-100 full participants**, 50% of which will be international, plus a broader local audience participating in selected events such as exhibitions and the final presentation / round table.
- The landscape forum puts the **local landscape** at its core
- An **international student competition** precedes the forum in the period October 2023 - January 2024.

Objectives of the Landscape Forum

What makes the LE:NOTRE Landscape Forum different from other European landscape events is the focus on dialogue, debate and discourse. It provides a unique opportunity to interact creatively with colleagues from a range of landscape disciplines in informal workshop and field visit settings. The aim is to create a stimulating environment to promote the generation of ideas and projects, for teaching, research and collaboration between theory, practice and civil society. A direct **forum outcome statement** and a **joint publication** will result from the meeting, to which all participants will contribute.

Antalya, on the Turkish Mediterranean coast, was the location of the first Forum in April 2012, followed by Rome in 2013, Sarajevo 2014, Bucharest 2015, Paphos/Cyprus 2016, Freising/Munich 2017, Malta/Gozo 2018, Zagreb 2019, Bratislava 2020 and Gdansk 2021, Rimini in Italy 2022 and the Stuttgart Region in Germany in 2023.

Why hold a Landscape Forum in Tartu and South Estonia?

- The Estonian University of Life Sciences is a **Green University** with a strong focus on the environment and landscape and the only university teaching a full programme of landscape architecture.
- It is the only university in Estonia **whose priorities in** academic and research activities **provide for the sustainable development of natural resources necessary for the existence of Man as well as the preservation of heritage and habitat**
- Within this the Bioeconomy plays a **leading role** and **The Centre of Bioeconomy** focuses on interdisciplinary collaboration initiatives within university's structural units and between other universities and research institutions as well as companies and organizations in Estonia and abroad.
- The **aim of the centre** is to initiate and coordinate interdisciplinary research and development of new innovative technologies; find additional financing opportunities; organize seminars, (international) conferences, public discussions and other scientific events in the field of Bioeconomy.
- **Tartu and its region**, located in the south of Estonia, contains a mix of natural and cultural landscapes strongly affected by numerous historical episodes, including a feudal land-owning structure up to the 1920s, a period of lands reform, collectivisation of agriculture under the Soviet regime between 1944 and 1991 and the subsequent restoration of land to former owners and the modernisation of the territory in the decades since.
- **Tartu is the second city of Estonia** and has a strong focus on education and research, being the home to major universities and research organisations.
- **Agriculture, forestry and tourism** represent the mainstays of the rural economy with many initiatives to move towards alternative approaches to food, fibre and timber production as well as bioenergy, nature tourism and innovative technologies, all of which relate to the bioeconomy and aims for sustainable solutions for meeting the green deal.
- These so-called 'sustainability challenges' are typical '**wicked problems**' evolving in a multipolar system of driving forces, interests, values, practices and 'locked-in' situations determined by past decisions, investments and ownership structures.
- In this context, the Landscape Forum aims at introducing '**landscape**' as an **inter- and transdisciplinary discourse platform**. In that sense, 'landscape' is understood as a method for bridging disciplinary and sectoral divides and for advancing knowledge.
- Our hypothesis is that this approach can be constructive and rewarding in the light of the 'wicked' sustainability challenges the Tartu region is facing. It is a **learning opportunity and a chance** for generating new collaborations, partnerships and project ideas across sectoral and disciplinary divides.
- We understand the Landscape Forum also as an opportunity to discuss and reflect how the **EU Green Deal** could be translated into the landscape realities of Stuttgart Region.
- The Landscape Forum acts in accordance with the **European Landscape Convention** (Council of Europe, 2000) and aims at promoting the landscape approach as a transdisciplinary sustainability strategy. Therefore, landscape, democracy, co-creation and participation are at the heart of the forum.

Forum target audiences

Participation in the Forum by teachers and researchers from a range of different 'landscape-related' disciplines as well as practitioners and civil society is central to the interdisciplinary process of discourse and mutual learning which is at its heart.

The forum addresses the following target groups:

- Researchers, professionals and educators of all landscape-related disciplines. This includes landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as everyday or degraded landscapes, according to the European Landscape Convention (2000).
- Disciplines represented in past forums have included landscape architecture, urban and regional planning, architecture, arts and the cultural sector, geography, agriculture, forestry, political and social sciences, history and cultural sciences, tourism and economy, mobility and infrastructure planning, civil engineering, water engineering, nature protection and ecology.
- Sectors addressed: public sector: administrations, local and regional authorities, teaching and research, non-governmental associations, and the private sector: planning offices and consultancies, industries and real estate

Become an agent of transdisciplinary landscape transformations

We welcome an interdisciplinary audience of academics, professionals, policy makers, students, community activists and nonprofits to join us as we discuss the landscape transformations needed to support sustainable efforts toward greater sustainability, public health, economic development, fine arts, historic preservation, communications, and many more. **Addressing the wicked problems of our time requires extensive collaboration across paradigms, epistemologies, and knowledge, and a shared commitment to bridge the gap between academia and civil society to envision democratic landscape transformations across scales and geographies.**

Landscape Forum Working Groups

Participants in the Forum will join with other attendees in working groups, each focused on advancing knowledge and ideas that relate to a specific dimension of landscape development, in synergy with other themes. The landscape of Tartu and South Estonia represents high relevance for the forum's focal and cross-cutting themes:

- **Waterscape**
- **Forest landscape**
- **Fibrescape**
- **Foodscape**
- **Recreation and nature tourism**
- **Tartu as a city of active transport**
- **Cross-cutting theme 1: Landscape and Democracy**
- **Cross-cutting theme 2: Landscape and Economy**

All themes will be explored by workshops, excursions, keynote lectures and roundtable discussions during the four main forum days. Additional activities prior to the forum include: International Student Competition, call for posters, preparative online lectures, colloquium for doctoral students, additional workshops for specific audiences

How can you contribute as a partner to the forum?

In the following, we list a couple of activities by which you can get involved:

- support the overall development of the landscape forum process and programme by giving feedback, providing ideas and/or linking to other experts, ideally now in the very early phase, but also later and throughout the process
- participate actively during the landscape forum for example by being part of one of the forum working groups (four days' workshop plus follow-up documentation and publication activities)
- help shaping the forum themes, audiences and activities by inviting your network to the working groups
- support the dissemination and communication of the event
- become part of the student competition jury
- exhibit your good practices at the forum poster exhibition

General timeline and next steps:

September 2023- January 2024: Formation of the forum working groups, further framing the focus themes, decision on and invitation of keynote speakers, seeking for additional event sponsoring

December 2023: Finalising forum communication, announcement and the registrations

December 2023 - April 2024: Early bird registrations

January - May 2024: Forum working groups develop a detailed programme for their workshops

First of June 2024: Final registrations

Second half of June 2024: Implementation of the Landscape Forum

July 2024: Communication of the Forum Outcome Statement

December 2024: Publication of Forum Proceedings / Workshop results

Background of the Landscape Forum and the LE:NOTRE Institute

The LE:NOTRE institute was established under the auspices of ECLAS, the European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools, as an umbrella organization for interdisciplinary collaboration between education, research and innovative practice in the landscape field

The goal of the LE:NOTRE Institute is to develop and strengthen the links between landscape education, research and innovative practice, in the public, private and not for profit sectors.

It aims to achieve this by furthering and facilitating communication, collaboration and cross-fertilisation of ideas on an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral basis, in order to promote the wider and deeper understanding of the cultural, environmental, social and economic role of the landscape for the benefit and well-being of society as a whole.

Contact

LE:NOTRE Institute

<http://www.le-notre.org>

office@le-notre.org

Local contact persons at the Estonian University of Life Sciences:

Simon Bell and Mana Taheri Talesh

Landscape Forum website: <http://forum.ln-institute.org>